From: David Peavey
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/20/01 6:22pm
Subject: The Microsoft penatly is a disgrace!

Dear USDOJ,

Do you really think that Microsoft is NOT a monopoly?   Do you really
believe they haven't used their massive size to virtually wipe out the
competition? Competition in sooooo many areas such as Word processing,
Spreadsheet, Block diagram dwgs, Internet Browsers, Email, etc. has all but
vanished. They certainly didn't use a superior product!

Lotus 123 used to be the most widely used spreadsheet application in the
accounting profession (where spreadsheets are mostly used). Quattro Pro was
better than Excel too. But Excel is the most widely used because MS used
their huge marketing, pricing, and development policies to squash the
competition. Now Lotus 123 and Quattro are all but gone.
Microsoft couldn't make a graphics program that was worth beans (Draw). So
they PURCHASED the ONLY serious competitor (VISIO). Since the purchase, the
quality of the product has gone down. And there are no other block diagram
type applications on the market.
I LOVED Netscape - but Netscape has basically "thrown in the towel" and
given up because IE is free! (But only if you buy their MS Windows). Why
isn't IE free for Linux?!?!?
And lets talk about MS Word. What ever happened to a clearly better
product - Word Perfect? It has been bannished to the Linux world because MS
isn't interested in developing a product where they don't have a
"head-start" on the internals of the OS. Word Perfect has a GREAT equation
editor - MS Word doesn't. But what do you suppose is the more widely used
product? All because MS used it's marketing, development, and pricing
strategies to muscle out the competition.
Outlook is not much better - There were plenty of really good email programs
on the market until MS started pushing it with Office. Now MS Outlook is
the most widely used. Do you really think America is less vulnerable to
computer viruses if we all only use one email program?!?!?! How many
Netscape Messenger computer viruses are there?!?!? Hint - less than 1. You
really should read "Cuckoo's Egg: Tracking a Spy Through the Maze of
Computer Espionage" by Clifford Stoll. His basic thesis is there is
strength in diversity - even in computer software.
Thank GOD you actually blocked Microsoft's purchase of Quicken. That was a
faint glimmer of intelligence in the Justice department. But why didn't you
block their purchase of VISIO? The glimmer was muscled out by Microsofts
marketing and pricing strategies.. :)

Besides their huge marketing and pricing strategies, Microsoft dominated
because of their unfair development strategies. In the office automation
tools, Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, IE - All are now dominant because
Microsoft knew the internals of the OS as these products were developed.

And they knew the internals before the OS was available to the rest of the world. Hence - they had a head start on the development. In addition, Microsoft unfairly knew about undocumented internal OS calls and functions that the competition could NOT have known about. This forced the competition to work harder. So Microsoft leveraged it's huge dominance in the OS market to dominate the other markets as well.

Do you have any idea how difficult it is now for a competitor to develop a serious competing word processor like Word or a spread sheet like Excel? There isn't a chance!

Who says "what's good for Microsoft is good for America"? Look at Quicken vs MS Money. Quicken shows real innovation whereas MS Money is crashy trash. This shows the power of real competition. Because of your blockage of MS's purchase of Quicken a few years ago, the products (both of them) have gotten REALLY good! There is NO stimulus to make IE better now is there?

And aren't you concerned about the "big brother" attitude of Microsoft? Consider Microsoft's Passport - where they collect all your personal information (including credit card information and passwords) to allow you to "browse the web" easier! Aren't you concerned about Americans' civil liberties and rights to privacy!?!?!?

This penalty is a sham! Sure the schools could use the bucks but - don't you know that Microsoft ALREADY has a school donation program that donates software and training to schools. All your penalty is saying - "yes, you should continue this". And do this with Microsoft products!

This is absurd! Microsoft didn't even get off with a slap on the wrist!

Personally, If I were judge, I would:
1) Split Microsoft into two pieces - Windows, and all the rest. This would "level the playing field" for all Office automation products giving all competitors an equal start when development commences.

2) Do the school donation thing - but make it NOT tax deductable (since it's a penaty after all) - and require them to support Apple and Linux OS's in equal parts to Microsoft. Students would then be more diversely educated - which allows for cross fertilization of software structures. Making all computer programs stronger and more resilient. The total amount of donations need to be 50% of their gross profits over the last 10 years. (Figuring that they would have been 50% less profitable if they had played fairly).

3) Require Microsoft to make their source code for all past, present, and future Operating systems (Windows, DOS, and any others they try to make that aren't called Windows and DOS) OPEN SOURCE within 3 months of it's release. This includes all patches, fixes, and updates. This would force Microsoft

to "come true" when competitors accuse them of "stealing" trade secrets.
All good software is open source anyway - this would force Microsoft to
"clean up their act" and make their programs less buggy.

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